MARVEL

CIVIL WAR II

CHOOSING SIDES 2

WAR MACHINE · GOLIATH · NICK FURY

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CIVIL WAR II

CHOOSING SIDES

EARTH'S HEROES PREVENTED AN ATTACK FROM THANOS THANKS TO A NEW INHUMAN NAMED ULYSSES, WHO SEEMS TO BE ABLE TO PREDICT THE FUTURE. THEIR VICTORY, HOWEVER, WAS NOT WITHOUT COST—JAMES RHODES, A.K.A. WAR MACHINE, WAS KILLED IN THE ENSUING BATTLE.

IRON MAN WARNED AGAINST USING ULYSSES' POWERS AGAIN, BELIEVING THAT THE FUTURE HAS TO BE ALLOWED TO TAKE ITS COURSE. CAPTAIN MARVEL DISAGREED, ARGUING THAT SAVING LIVES IS WORTH THE RISK.

AS TENSIONS RISE, EACH HERO WILL HAVE TO MAKE A CHOICE:
PROTECT THE FUTURE OR CHANGE THE FUTURE?

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"POST PROLOGUE" PART TWO

PREVIOUSLY: NICK FURY WAS SENT TO STOP A HYDRA CELL THAT, ACCORDING TO A PREMONITION FROM ULYSSES, WOULD END S.H.I.E.L.D. BUT FURY GOT ATTACKED BY HIS OWN TEAM, MAKING IT APPARENT THAT THE TRUE THREAT LIES WITHIN S.H.I.E.L.D. ITSELF. IN ORDER TO GET TO THE BOTTOM OF THIS, FURY HAS NOW FAKED HIS OWN DEATH...

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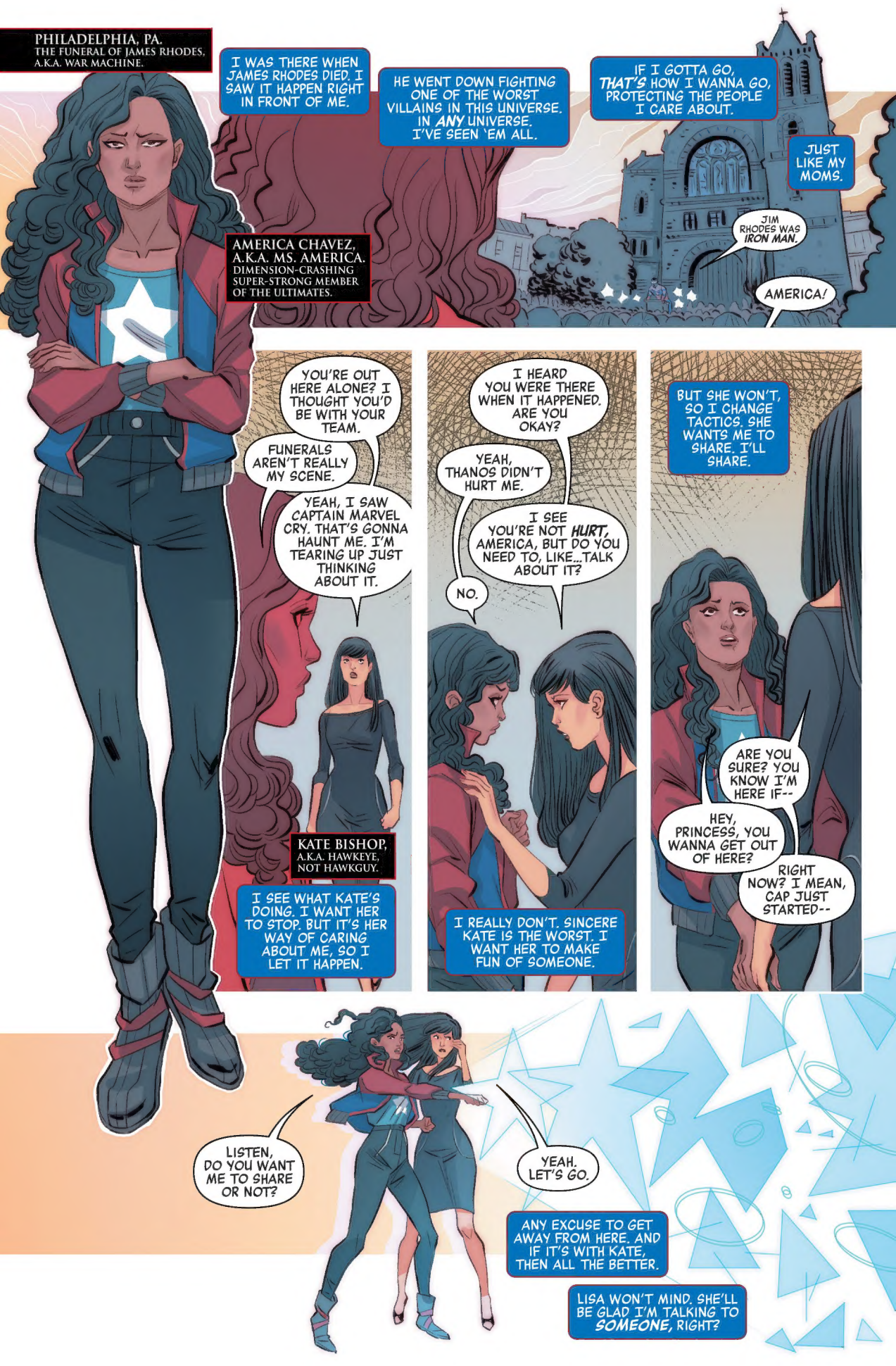
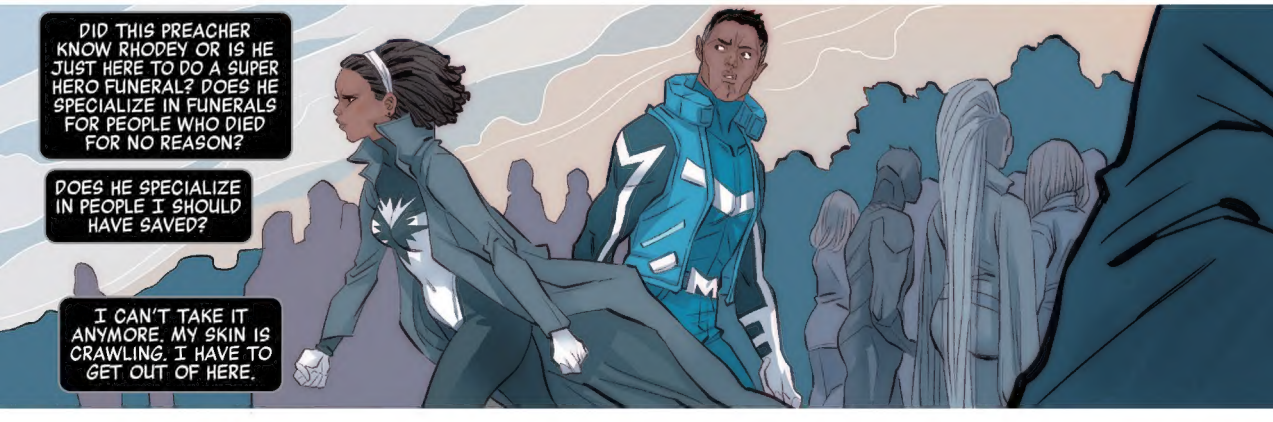
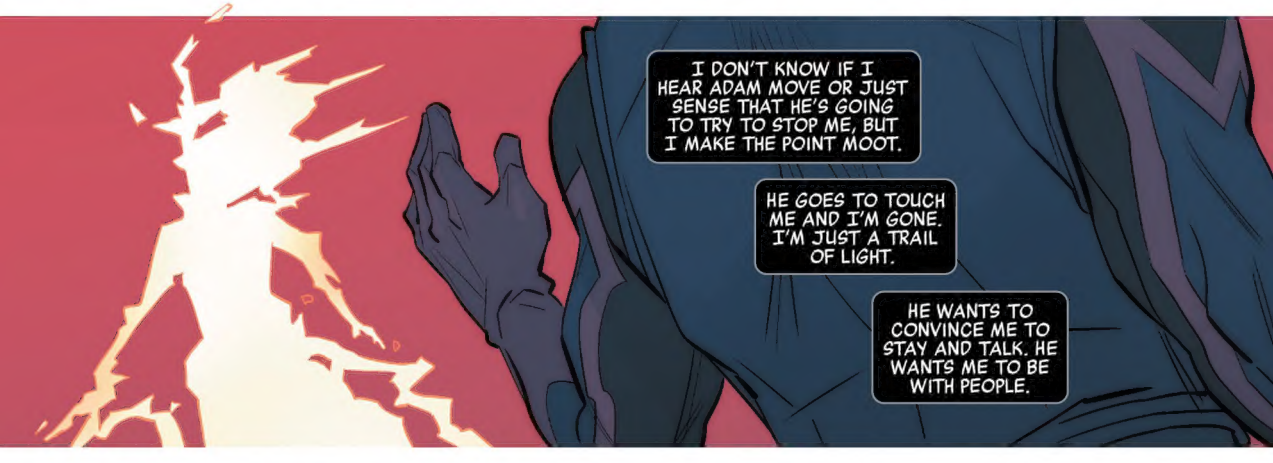
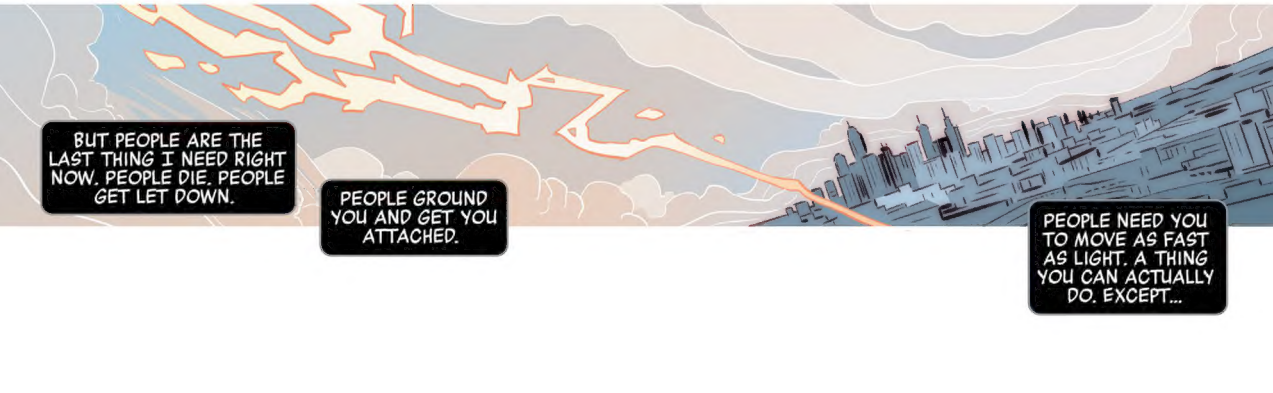
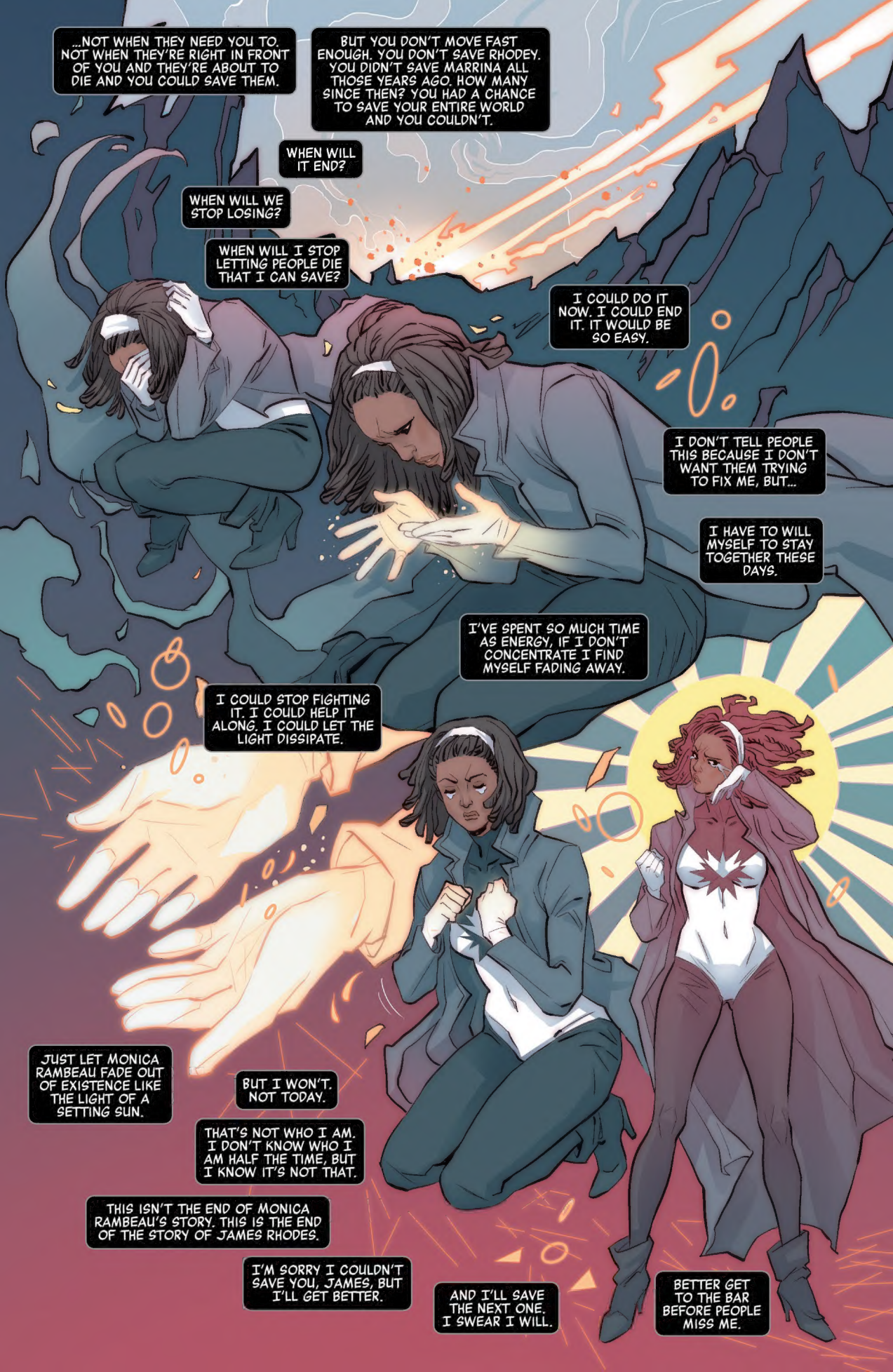

PHILADELPHIA, PA.
THE FUNERAL OF JAMES RHODES, A.K.A. WAR MACHINE.
I WAS THERE WHEN JAMES RHODES DIED. I SAW IT HAPPEN RIGHT IN FRONT OF ME.
HE WENT DOWN FIGHTING ONE OF THE WORST VILLAINS IN THIS UNIVERSE. IN ANY UNIVERSE. I'VE SEEN 'EM ALL.
IF I GOTTA GO, THAT'S HOW I WANNA GO, PROTECTING THE PEOPLE I CARE ABOUT.
JUST LIKE MY MOMS.
JIM RHODES WAS IRON MAN.
AMERICA!
AMERICA CHAVEZ, A.K.A. MS. AMERICA. DIMENSION-CRASHING SUPER-STRONG MEMBER OF THE ULTIMATES.
YOU'RE OUT HERE ALONE? I THOUGHT YOU'D BE WITH YOUR TEAM.
FUNERALS AREN'T REALLY MY SCENE.
YEAH, I SAW CAPTAIN MARVEL CRY. THAT'S GONNA HAUNT ME. I'M TEARING UP JUST THINKING ABOUT IT.
KATE BISHOP, A.K.A. HAWKEYE, NOT HAWKGUY.
I SEE WHAT KATE'S DOING. I WANT HER TO STOP. BUT IT'S HER WAY OF CARING ABOUT ME, SO I LET IT HAPPEN.
I HEARD YOU WERE THERE WHEN IT HAPPENED. ARE YOU OKAY?
YEAH, THANOS DIDN'T HURT ME.
I SEE YOU'RE NOT HURT, AMERICA, BUT DO YOU NEED TO, LIKE...TALK ABOUT IT?
NO.
I REALLY DON'T. SINCERE KATE IS THE WORST. I WANT HER TO MAKE FUN OF SOMEONE.
BUT SHE WON'T, SO I CHANGE TACTICS. SHE WANTS ME TO SHARE. I'LL SHARE.
ARE YOU SURE? YOU KNOW I'M HERE IF--
HEY, PRINCESS, YOU WANNA GET OUT OF HERE?
RIGHT NOW? I MEAN, CAP JUST STARTED--
LISTEN, DO YOU WANT ME TO SHARE OR NOT?
YEAH. LET'S GO.
ANY EXCUSE TO GET AWAY FROM HERE. AND IF IT'S WITH KATE, THEN ALL THE BETTER.
LISA WON'T MIND. SHE'LL BE GLAD I'M TALKING TO SOMEONE, RIGHT?

AFTER SAM FINISHES HIS EULOGY, A PREACHER STARTS TALKING ABOUT RHODEY. I CAN'T CONCENTRATE ON WHAT HE'S SAYING. I CAN'T CONCENTRATE ON ANYTHING THE LAST FEW DAYS.
I DON'T REALLY KNOW IF RHODEY WAS RELIGIOUS. DID HE GROW UP IN CHURCH EVERY SUNDAY LIKE I DID? DID HIS MOM FUSS OVER HIM UNTIL THEY WERE LATE, THEN FUSS AT HIM FOR MAKING THEM LATE?
MONICA RAMBEAU, A.K.A. SPECTRUM.
LIVING ELECTROMAGNETIC ENERGY. MEMBER OF THE ULTIMATES.

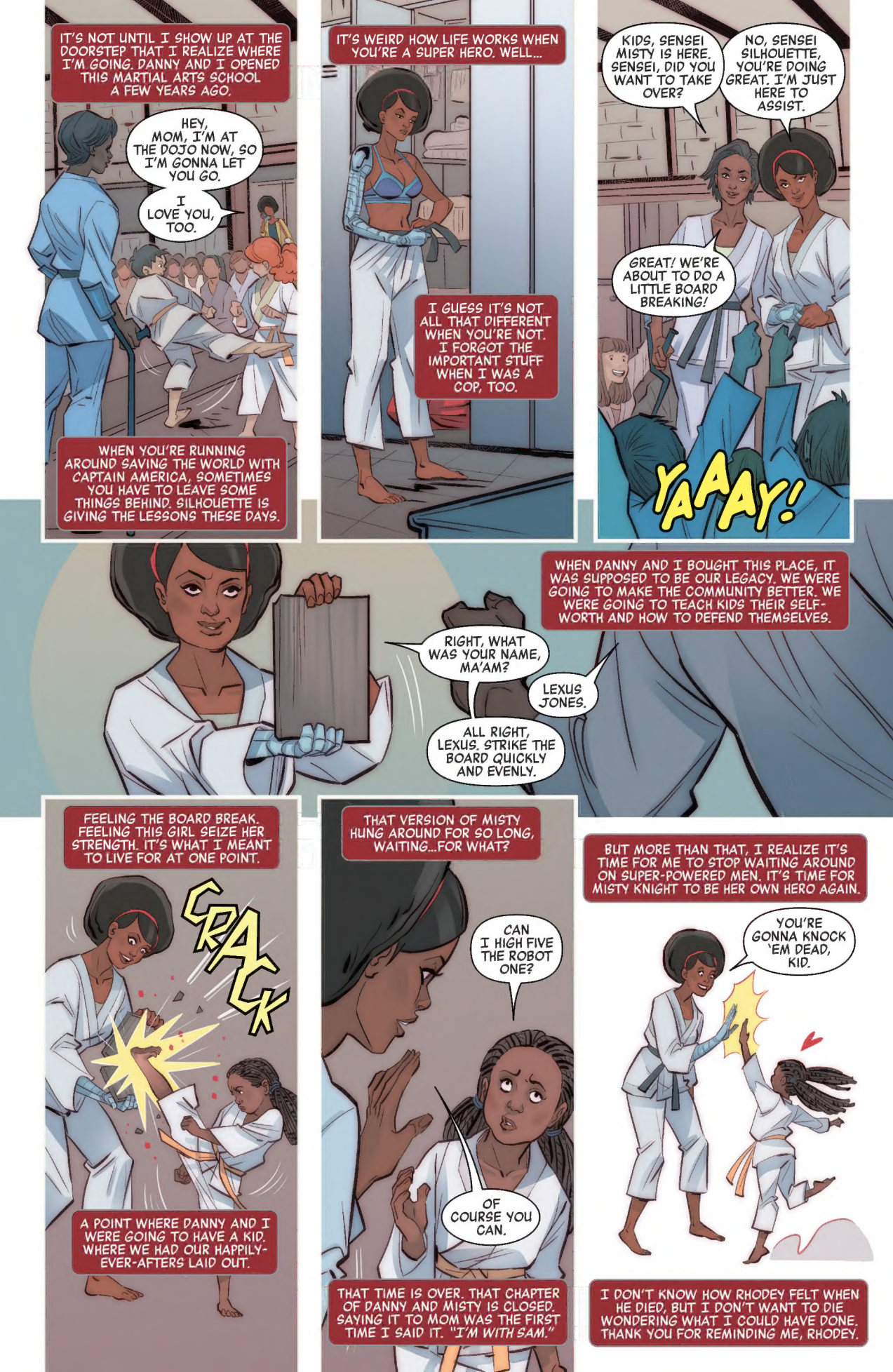

DID THIS PREACHER KNOW RHODEY OR IS HE JUST HERE TO DO A SUPER HERO FUNERAL? DOES HE SPECIALIZE IN FUNERALS FOR PEOPLE WHO DIED FOR NO REASON?
DOES HE SPECIALIZE IN PEOPLE I SHOULD HAVE SAVED?
I CAN'T TAKE IT ANYMORE. MY SKIN IS CRAWLING. I HAVE TO GET OUT OF HERE.

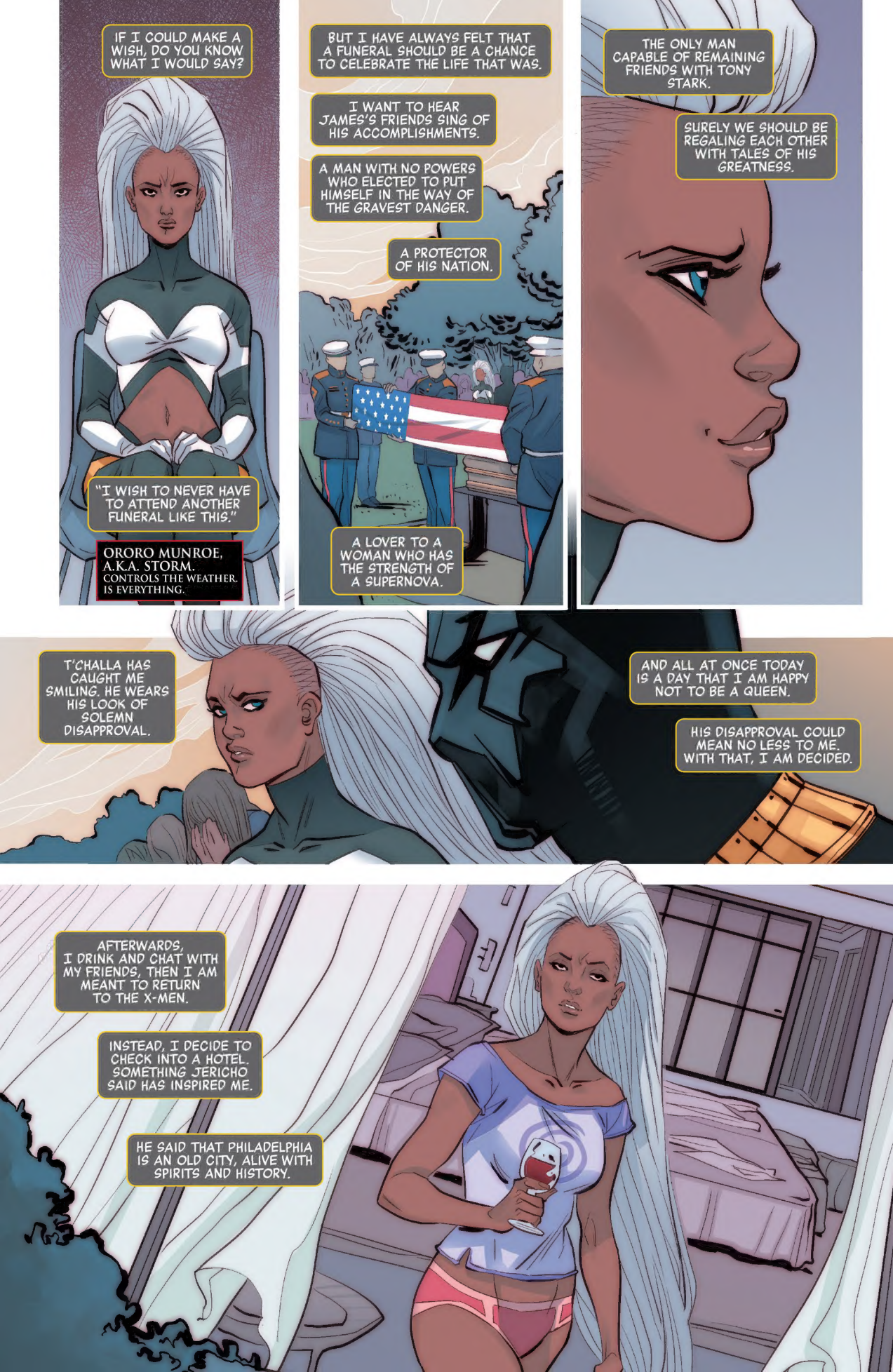

I DON'T KNOW IF I HEAR ADAM MOVE OR JUST SENSE THAT HE'S GOING TO TRY TO STOP ME, BUT I MAKE THE POINT MOOT.
HE GOES TO TOUCH ME AND I'M GONE. I'M JUST A TRAIL OF LIGHT.
HE WANTS TO CONVINCE ME TO STAY AND TALK. HE WANTS ME TO BE WITH PEOPLE.

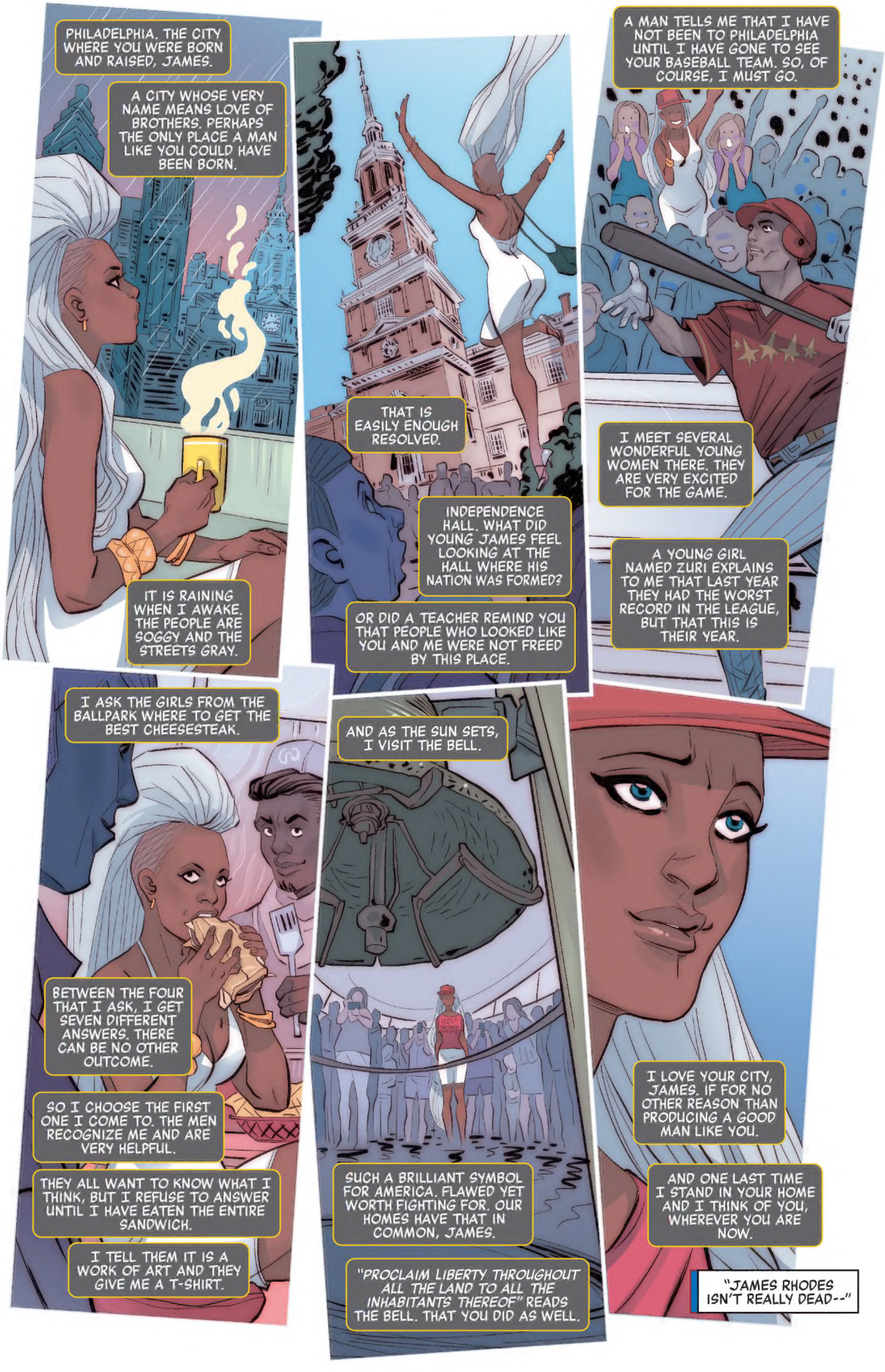

BUT PEOPLE ARE THE LAST THING I NEED RIGHT NOW. PEOPLE DIE. PEOPLE GET LET DOWN.
PEOPLE GROUND YOU AND GET YOU ATTACHED.
PEOPLE NEED YOU TO MOVE AS FAST AS LIGHT. A THING YOU CAN ACTUALLY DO. EXCEPT...


...NOT WHEN THEY NEED YOU TO. NOT WHEN THEY'RE RIGHT IN FRONT OF YOU AND THEY'RE ABOUT TO DIE AND YOU COULD SAVE THEM.
BUT YOU DON'T MOVE FAST ENOUGH. YOU DON'T SAVE RHODEY. YOU DIDN'T SAVE MARRINA ALL THOSE YEARS AGO. HOW MANY SINCE THEN? YOU HAD A CHANCE TO SAVE YOUR ENTIRE WORLD AND YOU COULDN'T.
WHEN WILL IT END?
WHEN WILL WE STOP LOSING?
WHEN WILL I STOP LETTING PEOPLE DIE THAT I CAN SAVE?
I COULD DO IT NOW. I COULD END IT. IT WOULD BE SO EASY.
I DON'T TELL PEOPLE THIS BECAUSE I DON'T WANT THEM TRYING TO FIX ME, BUT...
I HAVE TO WILL MYSELF TO STAY TOGETHER THESE DAYS.
I'VE SPENT SO MUCH TIME AS ENERGY, IF I DON'T CONCENTRATE I FIND MYSELF FADING AWAY.
I COULD STOP FIGHTING IT. I COULD HELP IT ALONG. I COULD LET THE LIGHT DISSIPATE.
JUST LET MONICA RAMBEAU FADE OUT OF EXISTENCE LIKE THE LIGHT OF A SETTING SUN.
BUT I WON'T. NOT TODAY.
THAT'S NOT WHO I AM. I DON'T KNOW WHO I AM HALF THE TIME, BUT I KNOW IT'S NOT THAT.
THIS ISN'T THE END OF MONICA RAMBEAU'S STORY. THIS IS THE END OF THE STORY OF JAMES RHODES.
I'M SORRY I COULDN'T SAVE YOU, JAMES, BUT I'LL GET BETTER.
AND I'LL SAVE THE NEXT ONE. I SWEAR I WILL.
BETTER GET TO THE BAR BEFORE PEOPLE MISS ME.

MISTY KNIGHT.
FORMER NYPD. CURRENT PARTNER OF CAPTAIN AMERICA. CYBERNETIC-ARMED HEROINE.
THIS AIN'T THE FIRST FUNERAL I'VE BEEN TO. DON'T EVEN THINK IT'S THE FIRST ONE THIS YEAR.
SO WHY'S IT HITTING ME SO HARD? IS IT THAT I KNEW RHODEY? IS IT THAT HE WAS ONE OF THE FIRST BLACK SUPER HEROES I MET? WHAT IS IT?
IT'S NOT UNTIL THE GATHERING AT THE BAR AFTERWARDS THAT I FIGURE IT OUT:
HE'S ME. JAMES RHODES IS ME.
MISTY, YOU OKAY?
YEAH, I'M FINE, SAM. WHAT TIME IS IT?
LATE, GIRL. WAY LATE.
IF YOU DON'T NEED ME, I'M GONNA TAKE THE TRAIN BACK TOMORROW, OKAY?
YEAH. THAT'S COOL.
I'M STILL THINKING ABOUT IT NEXT MORNING ON THE TRAIN. RHODEY WAS A MARINE. I WAS A COP. HE GOT A METAL SUIT. I GOT A METAL ARM.
AND WE'RE BOTH OUT HERE FIGHTING TITANS. WE'RE RUBBING ELBOWS WITH DEMIGODS. ONE MISSED DODGE AND WE'RE BOTH TOAST.
I FEEL FRIGHTENINGLY MORTAL. SO I DO WHAT YOU DO WHEN THAT HAPPENS, I GUESS.
HEY, MOM.
HOW ARE YOU? YEAH? NO, I JUST WANTED TO TALK.
I'M BACK IN BROOKLYN. YOU SAW IT ON TV?
YEAH, THEY DECIDED TO DO COSTUMES.
I HAD A NICE DRESS PICKED OUT, SO I ROCKED IT TODAY INSTEAD.
NO. I'M GOOD. I'M DRINKING PLENTY OF WATER.
SOMETIMES YOU JUST NEED TO HEAR YOUR MOM'S VOICE, YOU KNOW? EVEN IF SHE DOES IMMEDIATELY ASK THE WRONG QUESTIONS.
MY KUNG-FU BOYFRIEND? REALLY, MOM? I HAVEN'T SEEN DANNY IN MONTHS AND APPARENTLY HE DOESN'T KNOW HOW TO USE A PHONE. I HEAR HE AND LUKE ARE BACK TOGETHER AGAIN.
I'M WITH SAM, NOW.
MOM, PLEASE DO NOT CALL HIM "FAKE BUTT CAPTAIN AMERICA."


IT'S NOT UNTIL I SHOW UP AT THE DOORSTEP THAT I REALIZE WHERE I'M GOING. DANNY AND I OPENED THIS MARTIAL ARTS SCHOOL A FEW YEARS AGO.
HEY, MOM, I'M AT THE DOJO NOW, SO I'M GONNA LET YOU GO.
I LOVE YOU, TOO.
WHEN YOU'RE RUNNING AROUND SAVING THE WORLD WITH CAPTAIN AMERICA, SOMETIMES YOU HAVE TO LEAVE SOME THINGS BEHIND. SILHOUETTE IS GIVING THE LESSONS THESE DAYS.
IT'S WEIRD HOW LIFE WORKS WHEN YOU'RE A SUPER HERO. WELL...
I GUESS IT'S NOT ALL THAT DIFFERENT WHEN YOU'RE NOT. I FORGOT THE IMPORTANT STUFF WHEN I WAS A COP, TOO.
KIDS, SENSEI MISTY IS HERE. SENSEI, DID YOU WANT TO TAKE OVER?
NO, SENSEI SILHOUETTE, YOU'RE DOING GREAT. I'M JUST HERE TO ASSIST.
GREAT! WE'RE ABOUT TO DO A LITTLE BOARD BREAKING!
YAAAY!
WHEN DANNY AND I BOUGHT THIS PLACE, IT WAS SUPPOSED TO BE OUR LEGACY. WE WERE GOING TO MAKE THE COMMUNITY BETTER. WE WERE GOING TO TEACH KIDS THEIR SELF-WORTH AND HOW TO DEFEND THEMSELVES.
RIGHT, WHAT WAS YOUR NAME, MA'AM?
LEXUS JONES.
ALL RIGHT, LEXUS. STRIKE THE BOARD QUICKLY AND EVENLY.
FEELING THE BOARD BREAK. FEELING THIS GIRL SEIZE HER STRENGTH. IT'S WHAT I MEANT TO LIVE FOR AT ONE POINT.
CRACK
A POINT WHERE DANNY AND I WERE GOING TO HAVE A KID. WHERE WE HAD OUR HAPPILY-EVER-AFTERS LAID OUT.
THAT VERSION OF MISTY HUNG AROUND FOR SO LONG, WAITING...FOR WHAT?
CAN I HIGH FIVE THE ROBOT ONE?
OF COURSE YOU CAN.
THAT TIME IS OVER. THAT CHAPTER OF DANNY AND MISTY IS CLOSED. SAYING IT TO MOM WAS THE FIRST TIME I SAID IT. "I'M WITH SAM."
BUT MORE THAN THAT, I REALIZE IT'S TIME FOR ME TO STOP WAITING AROUND ON SUPER-POWERED MEN. IT'S TIME FOR MISTY KNIGHT TO BE HER OWN HERO AGAIN.
YOU'RE GONNA KNOCK 'EM DEAD, KID.
I DON'T KNOW HOW RHODEY FELT WHEN HE DIED, BUT I DON'T WANT TO DIE WONDERING WHAT I COULD HAVE DONE. THANK YOU FOR REMINDING ME, RHODEY.


IF I COULD MAKE A WISH, DO YOU KNOW WHAT I WOULD SAY?
"I WISH TO NEVER HAVE TO ATTEND ANOTHER FUNERAL LIKE THIS."
ORORO MUNROE, A.K.A. STORM.
CONTROLS THE WEATHER. IS EVERYTHING.
BUT I HAVE ALWAYS FELT THAT A FUNERAL SHOULD BE A CHANCE TO CELEBRATE THE LIFE THAT WAS.
I WANT TO HEAR JAMES'S FRIENDS SING OF HIS ACCOMPLISHMENTS.
A MAN WITH NO POWERS WHO ELECTED TO PUT HIMSELF IN THE WAY OF THE GRAVEST DANGER.
A PROTECTOR OF HIS NATION.
A LOVER TO A WOMAN WHO HAS THE STRENGTH OF A SUPERNOVA.
THE ONLY MAN CAPABLE OF REMAINING FRIENDS WITH TONY STARK.
SURELY WE SHOULD BE REGALING EACH OTHER WITH TALES OF HIS GREATNESS.
T'CHALLA HAS CAUGHT ME SMILING. HE WEARS HIS LOOK OF SOLEMN DISAPPROVAL.
AND ALL AT ONCE TODAY IS A DAY THAT I AM HAPPY NOT TO BE A QUEEN.
HIS DISAPPROVAL COULD MEAN NO LESS TO ME. WITH THAT, I AM DECIDED.
AFTERWARDS, I DRINK AND CHAT WITH MY FRIENDS, THEN I AM MEANT TO RETURN TO THE X-MEN.
INSTEAD, I DECIDE TO CHECK INTO A HOTEL. SOMETHING JERICHO SAID HAS INSPIRED ME.
HE SAID THAT PHILADELPHIA IS AN OLD CITY, ALIVE WITH SPIRITS AND HISTORY.


PHILADELPHIA. THE CITY WHERE YOU WERE BORN AND RAISED, JAMES.
A CITY WHOSE VERY NAME MEANS LOVE OF BROTHERS. PERHAPS THE ONLY PLACE A MAN LIKE YOU COULD HAVE BEEN BORN.
IT IS RAINING WHEN I AWAKE. THE PEOPLE ARE SOGGY AND THE STREETS GRAY.
THAT IS EASILY ENOUGH RESOLVED.
INDEPENDENCE HALL. WHAT DID YOUNG JAMES FEEL LOOKING AT THE HALL WHERE HIS NATION WAS FORMED?
OR DID A TEACHER REMIND YOU THAT PEOPLE WHO LOOKED LIKE YOU AND ME WERE NOT FREED BY THIS PLACE.
A MAN TELLS ME THAT I HAVE NOT BEEN TO PHILADELPHIA UNTIL I HAVE GONE TO SEE YOUR BASEBALL TEAM. SO, OF COURSE, I MUST GO.
I MEET SEVERAL WONDERFUL YOUNG WOMEN THERE. THEY ARE VERY EXCITED FOR THE GAME.
A YOUNG GIRL NAMED ZURI EXPLAINS TO ME THAT LAST YEAR THEY HAD THE WORST RECORD IN THE LEAGUE, BUT THAT THIS IS THEIR YEAR.
I ASK THE GIRLS FROM THE BALLPARK WHERE TO GET THE BEST CHEESESTEAK.
BETWEEN THE FOUR THAT I ASK, I GET SEVEN DIFFERENT ANSWERS. THERE CAN BE NO OTHER OUTCOME.
SO I CHOOSE THE FIRST ONE I COME TO. THE MEN RECOGNIZE ME AND ARE VERY HELPFUL.
THEY ALL WANT TO KNOW WHAT I THINK, BUT I REFUSE TO ANSWER UNTIL I HAVE EATEN THE ENTIRE SANDWICH.
I TELL THEM IT IS A WORK OF ART AND THEY GIVE ME A T-SHIRT.
AND AS THE SUN SETS, I VISIT THE BELL.
SUCH A BRILLIANT SYMBOL FOR AMERICA. FLAWED YET WORTH FIGHTING FOR. OUR HOMES HAVE THAT IN COMMON, JAMES.
"PROCLAIM LIBERTY THROUGHOUT ALL THE LAND TO ALL THE INHABITANTS THEREOF" READS THE BELL. THAT YOU DID AS WELL.
I LOVE YOUR CITY, JAMES. IF FOR NO OTHER REASON THAN PRODUCING A GOOD MAN LIKE YOU.
AND ONE LAST TIME I STAND IN YOUR HOME AND I THINK OF YOU, WHEREVER YOU ARE NOW.
"JAMES RHODES ISN'T REALLY DEAD--"

--THE JAMES RHODES OF EARTH-55 TOOK STARK'S PLACE AS IRON MAN AFTER STARK DIED. HE LEADS THE AVENGERS.
I MEAN, THAT HAPPENED ON OUR EARTH, BUT TONY HAD ACTUALLY FAKED--
MOVING ON.
EARTH-727'S JAMES RHODES MOVED BACK TO PHILADELPHIA AFTER HIS MILITARY SERVICE AND BECAME MAYOR.
AND IS SUPER HOT IN THAT SUIT!
ON EARTH-57289, TONY STARK WORKS AS A SCIENTIST FOR RHODES LABS INTERNATIONAL.
OH! I HOPE HE GIVES HIM A HARD TIME ABOUT EVERYTHING.
AND THERE'S--
OH, MY GOD, NO. I'M GOING TO CRY.
YOU SEE WHAT I MEAN? THIS JAMES IS DEAD, AND I HATE THAT I COULDN'T SAVE HIM, BUT THERE ARE A NEAR INFINITE NUMBER OF JAMES RHODESES OUT THERE.
IS THAT HOW YOU SEE US ALL, AMERICA?
INTERCHANGEABLE?
I RECOGNIZE HER TONE. THIS CONVERSATION ISN'T ABOUT RHODEY ANYMORE. THIS IS ABOUT KATE AND AMERICA.
THIS JAMES RHODES GLADLY GAVE HIS LIFE TO PROTECT HIS WORLD AND WOULD DO IT AGAIN. OTHER JAMES RHODES HAVE OTHER POSSIBILITIES.
BUT DYING FIGHTING FOR PEOPLE YOU CARE ABOUT, THAT'S THE WAY TO GO. THAT'S WHY I ALWAYS COME BACK TO THIS EARTH.
WHAT PEOPLE DO YOU CARE ABOUT SO MUCH ON THIS PARTICULAR EARTH?
WOULDN'T YOU LIKE TO KNOW, PRINCESS...
END.

THE CELLAR.
ONE WEEK AFTER THE START OF THE SECOND SUPERHUMAN CIVIL WAR.
Inmate #24653 was no James Rhodes. I knew that much from the **second** I laid eyes on him.
He was one of those guys I just **hate.** You know the ones. The **blamers.**
Rhodes was a **real** hero, before he even met Tony Stark, and when the time came, he always **stood up.** He took responsibility.
Even on his very last day on Earth.
Because outside of that fancy suit, he was **never** small. Even though #24653 could grow as tall as a building--
--he thought small, and he wouldn't admit that was the **real** reason he ended up in here.
#24653
The things inside him just weren't big enough.

GO AWAY.
VRRRRRMMMM
"My uncle died. Somebody needs to pay." That was this "hero's" thinking when he decided to take on the Avengers.
AH, COME ON, GOLIATH, I KNOW HOW THIS LOOKS...BUT THINKER HERE'S GOT A GOOD PLAN, AND SEE, YOUR POWER DAMPENER'S DOWN FOR THE COUNT.
WHAT SAY WE GET BACK OUT IN THE WORLD?
But if it wasn't for the Avengers, who would even know about his uncle? Had you ever heard of Bill Foster before he died?
He was breaking the law, and a bad thing happened to him while he was doing it.
YOU HEARD ME.
YOU'RE A BRILLIANT MAN, THOMAS. I HAVE LITTLE DOUBT YOU COULD SIMPLY LEAVE THIS PLACE ANY TIME YOU WANTED, BUT FOR SOME--
AAAAH!
What happened to Bill Foster was **because** of Bill Foster.
H-HELP ME! S-SOMEBODY--

I really believed all that, but maybe that was never the whole story. Maybe he just wanted to make sure that his uncle wasn't forgotten.
TOUGH LUCK, COP, WE'VE BEEN WAITING WAY TOO LONG FOR ANOTHER CHANCE, AND YOU--
That the most notable thing about Bill Foster's life wasn't his **death.**
ENOUGH.
Hell, not even Rhodes got it right every time. When his sister Jeanette was taken from him, he went outside the law to make it right.
It was a mistake, but it wasn't one that defined his entire life forever.
Maybe in his grief and his anger, #24653 did the wrong thing one time, which I thought meant he'd do the wrong thing **every** time.

The problem wasn't **really** with him at all, and I've come here to admit that now, **publicly,** and on the official record.
The man I saw that day of the riot was **always** in there.
I told myself things so I **wouldn't** see it.
I forgot that no man is all good or all bad.
The man made a **mistake,** and I closed the entire book on him.
Then I **burned** that book.
Until the truth was standing right in front of me.
And I had **no** other choice but to finally see it.

I saw him in the same way he might see himself.
What he could be.
What he **will** be.
With his powers back, all he had to do was stand up and walk right out of here. If he wanted to.
If he was who I **thought** he was.
Instead--

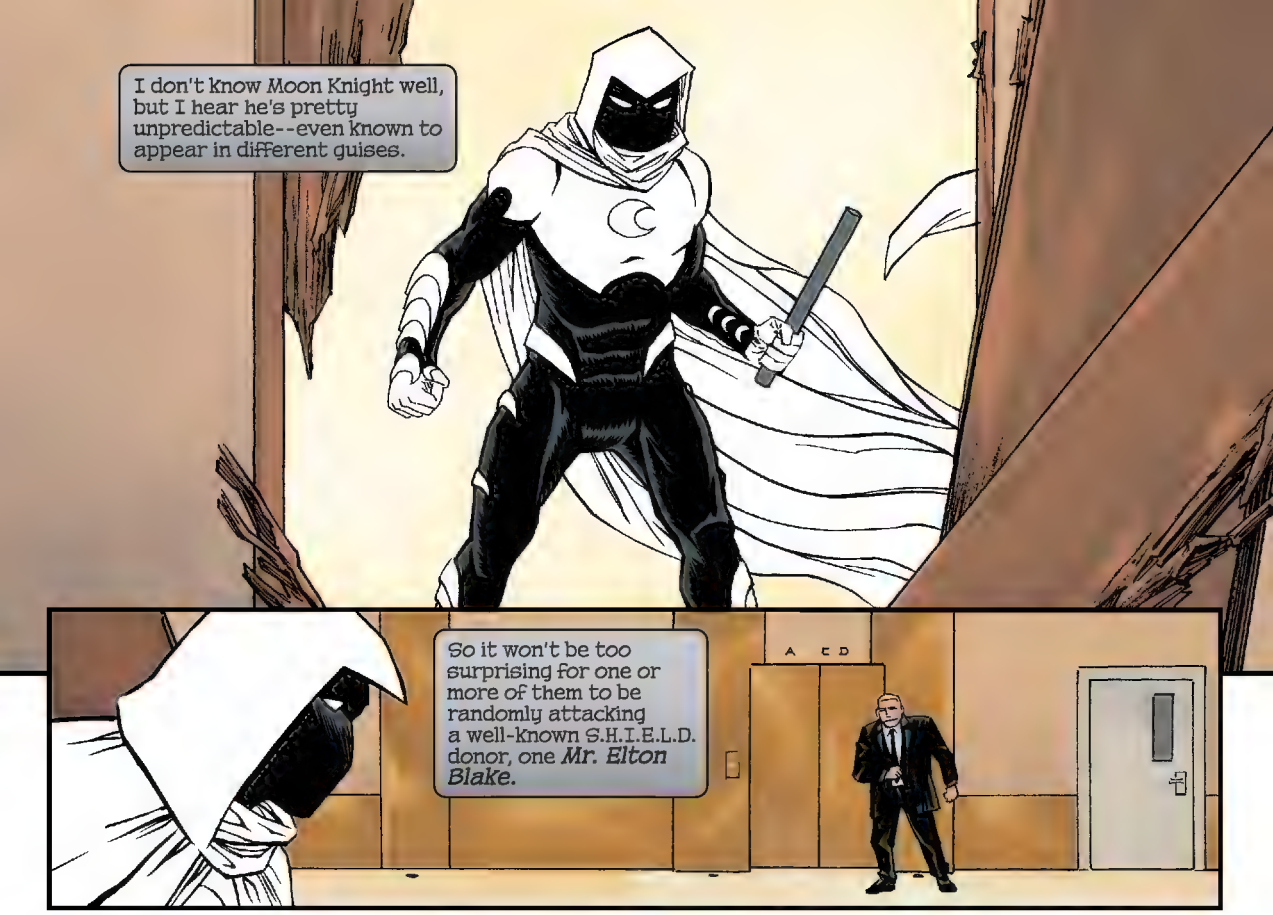
Inmate #246--pardon me, **Tom Foster** put an end to all of it.
He saved dozens of lives, and who knows how many others that would've been lost if the **actual** monsters got loose.
I'M HERE THIS MORNING 'CAUSE I WAS *WRONG* ABOUT TOM FOSTER. THE MAN IS MANY THINGS, BUT SMALL AIN'T ONE OF THEM, AND HE DESERVES ANOTHER SHOT TO KEEP TRYING TO DO *RIGHT*.
YOU ASK ME IF HE'S A BETTER MAN THAN JAMES RHODES, GOD REST HIS SOUL, AND THE ANSWER'S STILL NO. NOT YET, HE'S NOT.
BUT HE COULD BE ONE DAY, AND THE ONLY WAY TO BRING THAT ABOUT IS TO ADMIT ONE CLEAR AND OBVIOUS THING I'VE NOW LEARNED ABOUT TOM FOSTER--
--THAT MAN DON'T BELONG IN HERE.
YES, WELL, WE'LL TAKE ALL THIS UNDER ADVISEMENT, OFFICER MOORE, AND WE WISH YOUR INJURED MEN A SPEEDY RECOVERY FROM THEIR--
STAND UP, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN...THAT'S ALL HE HAD TO DO.
THANKS FOR YOUR TIME.

WEEKS PASS...
CONGRATULATIONS, TOM--
--AND GOOD LUCK TO YOU. I'M SO GLAD TO HAVE FINALLY MET YOU--THE REAL YOU.
APPRECIATE IT, OFFICER MOORE. YOU TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF.
BIG PLANS ONCE YOU MAKE IT BACK TO THE WORLD?
GIANT.
THE END.

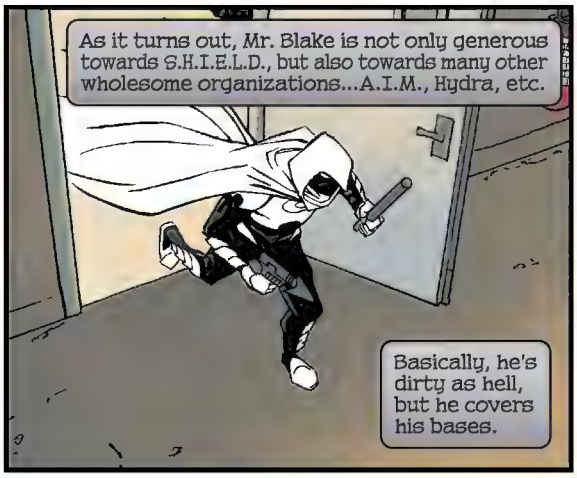
CHICAGO.
22:49 HRS.

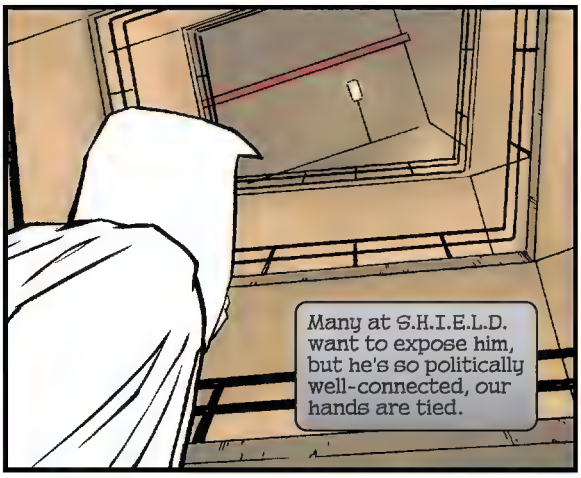
COVERT LOG: My name is Nick Fury and I'm dead.
I've been forced to go underground in order to track the leader of a traitorous cell embedded within S.H.I.E.L.D.
Being dead and all, I don't have the usual resources available to me, so I've had to improvise.
I've had to call in some favors.

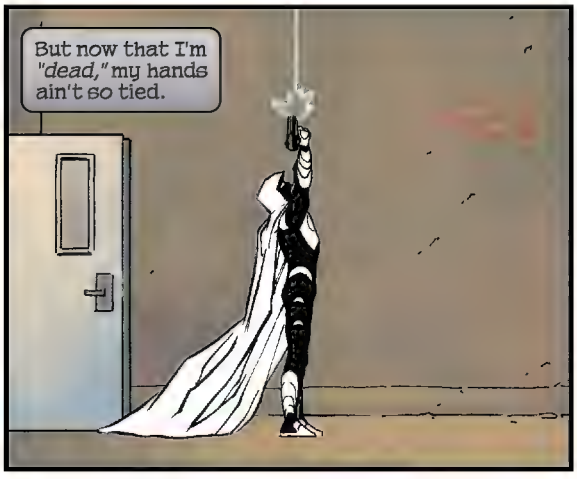
You may have heard of *Marc Spector.* He's been a marine, mercenary, agent, producer...
HELP! HELP ME! SECURITY!
Spector's multiple occupations are matched by his multiple personalities.
Some of those personalities when merged result in the vigilante known as *Moon Knight.*

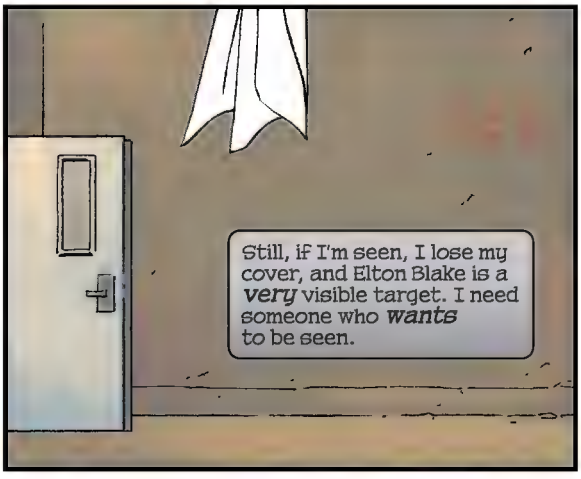

I don't know Moon Knight well, but I hear he's pretty unpredictable--even known to appear in different guises.

So it won't be too surprising for one or more of them to be randomly attacking a well-known S.H.I.E.L.D. donor, one *Mr. Elton Blake.*

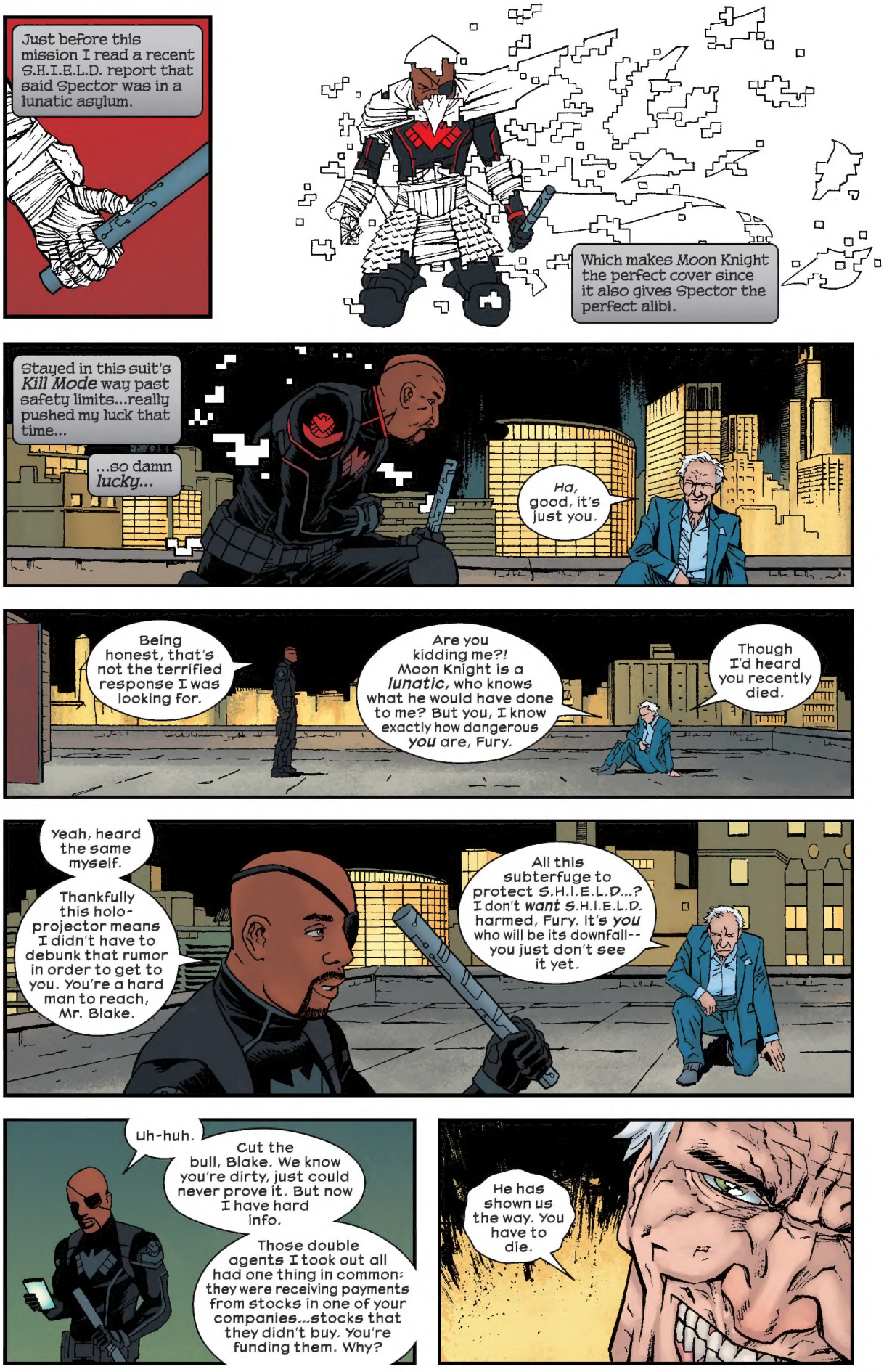

As it turns out, Mr. Blake is not only generous towards S.H.I.E.L.D., but also towards many other wholesome organizations...A.I.M., Hydra, etc.
Basically, he's dirty as hell, but he covers his bases.


Many at S.H.I.E.L.D. want to expose him, but he's so politically well-connected, our hands are tied.


But now that I'm *"dead,"* my hands ain't so tied.


Still, if I'm seen, I lose my cover, and Elton Blake is a ***very*** visible target. I need someone who ***wants*** to be seen.

Word is Moon Knight was dead once, too.
EXIT
Real dead, not the *convenient* kind like I am.
Ugh!
Unfortunately, Moon Knight can't help me.


Just before this mission I read a recent S.H.I.E.L.D. report that said Spector was in a lunatic asylum.
Which makes Moon Knight the perfect cover since it also gives Spector the perfect alibi.
Stayed in this suit's *Kill Mode* way past safety limits...really pushed my luck that time...
...so damn *lucky*...
Ha, good, it's just you.
Being honest, that's not the terrified response I was looking for.
Are you kidding me?! Moon Knight is a *lunatic*, who knows what he would have done to me? But you, I know exactly how dangerous *you* are, Fury.
Though I'd heard you recently died.
Yeah, heard the same myself.
Thankfully this holo-projector means I didn't have to debunk that rumor in order to get to you. You're a hard man to reach, Mr. Blake.
All this subterfuge to protect S.H.I.E.L.D...? I don't *want* S.H.I.E.L.D. harmed, Fury. It's *you* who will be its downfall--you just don't see it yet.
Uh-huh.
Cut the bull, Blake. We know you're dirty, just could never prove it. But now I have hard info.
Those double agents I took out all had one thing in common: they were receiving payments from stocks in one of your companies...stocks that they didn't buy. You're funding them. Why?
He has shown us the way. You have to die.

Yes, "he." So you follow this "Leader," too. Tell me more about him. Specifically, where he is.
Why not? It won't matter, the prophecy will be fulfilled.
S.H.I.E.L.D. base #4590. Codename CULLD. If you move fast, you'll catch him in time. If you move too slow, you've lost him for good.
That's sporting of you, thanks, Blake. Thought I was gonna have to give you the good-guy speech. Failing that: punching.
Good guy? Agent Fury, the difference between you and me is that I know what side I'm on. Unlike you, I have conviction.
You'll have a conviction, pal. And I intend to be in the courtroom when you go dow--
NO!
TO BE CONTINUED...

NEXT ISSUE:

KATE BISHOP

J. JONAH JAMESON

NICK FURY